

ETC.
M a g a z i n e

CRYSTAL LIES

The truth and consequences
of party 'n' play in gay S.F.

Plus:
Resegregation
Mission Discovery

SPRING 2004

City College of San Francisco



ETC.
Magazine
SPRING 2004

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Front cover photo: **Anthony Castellano**

Inside front cover photo: **Dante Mendoza**

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Inside back cover photo: **Anthony Castellano**

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Water Goddess

by Sarah Romney

*Natalie Coughlin
prepares to join
the pantheon of
world-class athletes
in Greece for the
Summer Olympics*



photo courtesy of Getty Images

Natalie Coughlin, an attractive 21-year-old from Concord, is an honors student majoring in psychology at the University of California at Berkeley. She loves throwing dinner parties, watching boxing matches and playing with her dog. Coughlin is also a superstar swimmer who will be competing as the hands-down favorite in several events at this Summer's Olympic Games in Greece.

But even with the combination of her talent, preparation and motivation, due to time conflicts she won't be able to compete in all four of her best events—the 100 butterfly, the 100 and 200 backstroke and the 100 freestyle. She is still deciding which events she will compete in.

After the Olympics, Coughlin will make the transition from amateur athlete to pro. This includes picking up an agent and endorsements, as well as facing a barrage of media attention.

Coughlin has been swimming since before she can remember, learning in her backyard pool as a child. After graduating from Concord's Carondelet High School in 2000, where she set national high school records and was the first to qualify in all 14 women's individual swimming events at the nationals, she became the top high school recruit in the United States.

An astonishing college athletic career followed. Her achievements include five world records, 17 American titles, nine NCAA titles and six NCAA records. She remains undefeated in dual meets, despite the extreme stress.

"That pressure has been on me since my freshman year, and it's only gotten worse and worse," Coughlin said. "To tell you the truth, when the [last] meet [at Stanford] was over, I was glad. But that's not looming over my head anymore. It was so stressful, but

it's something I'm very proud of."

Coughlin is considered one of the top female swimmers in the world, not only because of her remarkable records, but also her unique versatility.

"It's difficult when you do so many events," she said, "because I have to work on my starts for each of the strokes and my turns for each of the strokes." But Coughlin is exceptionally driven. "I just can't possibly do the same thing every day. It's so boring."

The chance to see Coughlin in the Olympics this summer is especially thrilling for fans because of her absence from the games in 2000. The difficult recovery from a torn shoulder tendon caused Coughlin to finish fourth in the 200 individual medley at the Olympic Trials, and she failed to qualify for a place on the team.

Coughlin suffered another disappointment last summer at the world-championships in Barcelona, where she had to swim with the flu and a 102-degree fever. She even failed to qualify in one of the events she holds the world record in. However, disappointment doesn't seem to affect her drive.

"It's an Olympic year," she said. "I'm going to be motivated no matter what."

The Olympics will certainly bring Coughlin overdue fame. So will her professional status and upcoming endorsements. But Coughlin isn't interested in anything but swimming. It will be "just a different part of my career," she said. "I don't expect it to be completely easy, but [Berkeley coach Terri McKeever] and I have done a good job about preparing for it."

Northwest of Center

The Presidio housing alternative

by Joseph Magnuson

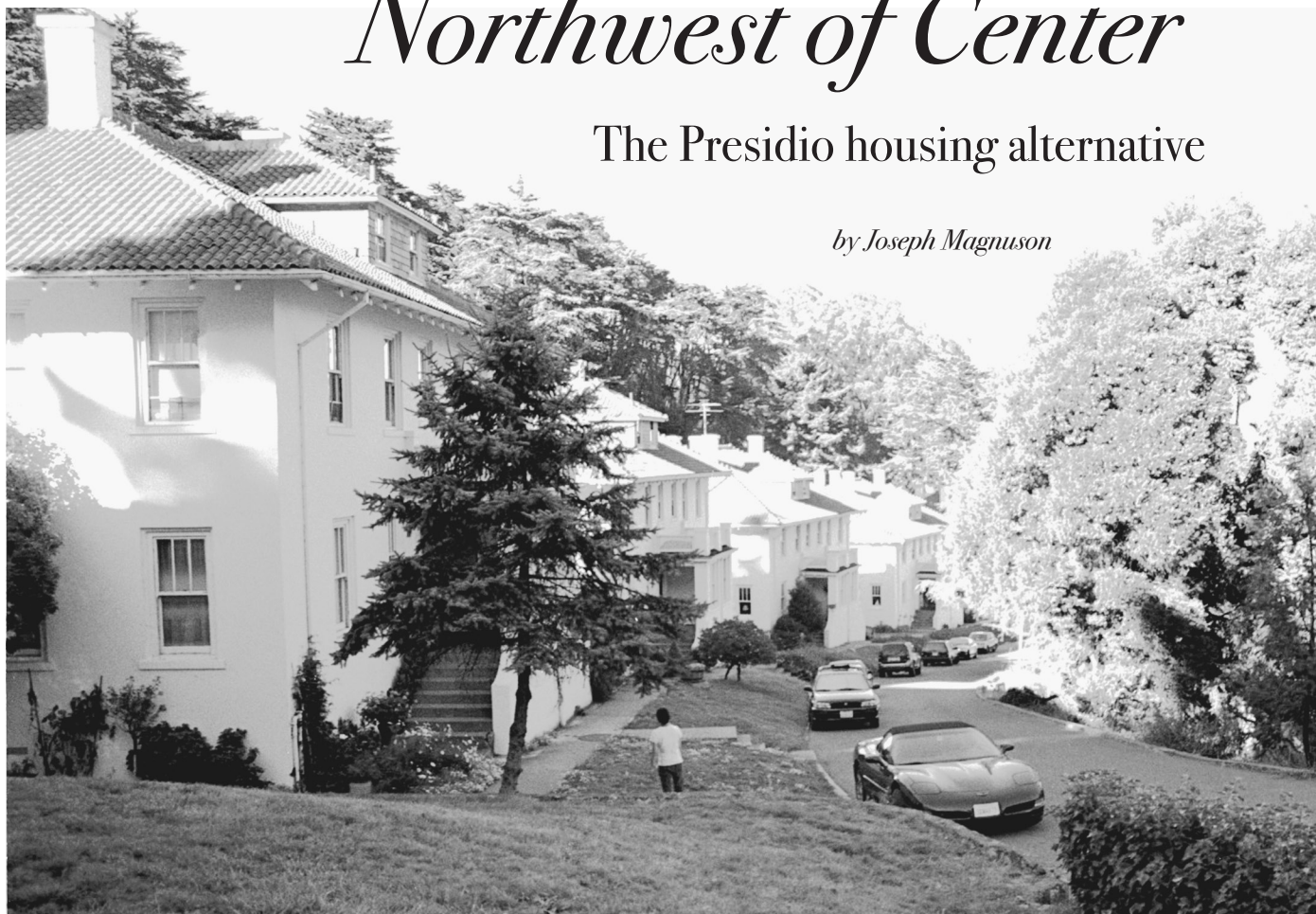


photo: Alice Tse

THE FEELING OF COMMUNITY MIGHT BE ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE UNIQUE EXPERIENCE OF LIVING “AWAY” FROM THE CITY

Everything from astronomically-high rents to closet-sized bedrooms can be a factor in many people’s quest for the “right place” to live in San Francisco. It can look downright glum to the apartment hunter searching in the middle of the city, but a little higher on the map is a national park that also serves as an affordable housing reserve.

The Presidio is a place where nature and neighborhoods come together, making it unlike any other area of the city. Visitors may react with, “You... live here?” while looking around in disbelief at the spacious living quarters of homes set among the trees, close enough to the ocean to hear the waves and not the traffic.

It is a friendly, community-oriented environment where all types of people live—from punk rockers to students to families. There are basketball and tennis courts, a baseball diamond, a playground and one of the few bowling alleys in San Francisco.

Most nights, people hang out on their stoops or have their doors open. Neighbors smile and say hello. The feeling of community might be attributable to the unique experience of living “away” from the city.

Out of the nearly 1,500 acres in the Presidio, almost 1,000 acres are undeveloped wilderness. The rest of the park hosts a mix of non-profit and government organizations and housing.

Approximately 2,400 people live in the Presidio’s 1,000 household units, with park workers inhabiting a quarter of the apartments. Houses are available to the general public, but there is a Preferred Rental Program for park employees.

Rentals vary from \$2,300 per month for townhouses in the Baker Beach and MacArthur neighborhoods to \$4,500 per month for the Infantry Terrace four-bedroom units. Utilities are included, and each apartment has a washer/dryer room, a modern kitchen, ample closet space and an enormous living room. And that’s just the inside.

There are 25 miles of national park trails for anyone interested in walking, biking or reflecting on any one of the postcard-view overlooks of the San Francisco Bay and the Pacific Ocean.

And one can truly reflect because there is something that the rest of the city can’t offer—silence.

e

The New Gay Plague

*The escalating
meth abuse crisis
that's shaming
a community*

by Mark Izatt Folkman

Jake stands in front of the bathroom mirror, his face bleeding in several places from self-inflicted lacerations. He's been there for the longest time, staring at his reflection and repeatedly digging his fingernails into his pores.

Trance music thumps from the nearby living room stereo, but Jake is so intently focused on mutilation that he's oblivious to the noise.

Jake is high on crystal methamphetamine, a powerful and highly addictive central nervous system stimulant. It's been a day since he's eaten and over three days since he's slept. Strange voices echo inside his head; he can hear people arguing and calling his name, although he is alone in the apartment. He is convinced that he's being watched. Several hours later Jake's body finally crashes to the bathroom floor. He passes out, temporarily free from paranoia and psychosis.

Like countless other young gay men in San Francisco, Jake was introduced to crystal meth at The End Up, an all-night South of Market dance club where illegal drug use is prevalent. A co-worker accompanying Jake asked if he wanted to try the drug. "We went to his car and I did a line. I remember loving it because I could dance and dance and not get tired."

Although he intended to use crystal only on weekends while out clubbing, Jake soon discovered that meth had other plans for him. What begins as occasional experimentation becomes full-blown addiction for most users. Cheap and easy to obtain, crystal meth is used in virtually all cultures and populations in the Bay Area, but nowhere are its effects felt more than in the gay community. Studies show that 40 percent of gay men in San Francisco have used crystal meth, and LGBT recovery programs report long waiting lists for treatment.

Even more alarming are recent findings showing that gay meth users are more likely to eschew condoms during sex, putting them at risk for contracting any number of sexually transmitted diseases. A study published last year in the San Francisco



been changed to protect his identity, described a similar path to addiction. He started using crystal as a teenager while partying in the hard-edge Philadelphia club scene. After moving to San Francisco, Brandon became a regular at Club Universe, a gigantic gay dance party that was held at a South of Market venue.

In his Club Universe days, Brandon used crystal occasionally but was mainly an “EKG kid,” a term derived from the initials of the illegal club drugs, took in succession as his evenings progressed: first ecstasy, then Special K and finally GHB.

When Club Universe closed in 2002, Brandon ramped up his crystal use and started dealing. Having unlimited access to crystal, Brandon began smoking it every day.

“I would get paranoid and delusional. My paranoia was always about my body and my weight. I was convinced that people could tell I was emaciated,” Brandon says. “I lost four teeth. Meth eats out your teeth if you smoke it.”

Despite escalating health problems, Brandon was unable to curtail his drug use. Treating meth addiction is difficult, and treatment programs fall short of meeting increased demand for their services.

“Speed addiction has a high level of relapse. It seems from every provider I’ve talked to that the relapse rate is just incredible,” says Steven Tierney, director of HIV prevention for the San Francisco Department of Public Health. “I see a lot of people dealing with cocaine and alcohol, and people relapse with all sorts of addictions, but nothing like crystal. People just relapse over and over again.”

Dufty cites the need to drastically re-engineer treatment programs. “The services we have now are not appropriate for young adults. Most are structured around 20-year heroin users. I don’t see that being a good recipe for success.”

Tierney calls for a much longer treatment period. He says that New Leaf, a local treatment facility, has had success with users who remain in treatment and aftercare for a period of 18 months, but “most insurance companies only pay for at most 28 days (of treatment).” Programs are also crippled by limited budgets and staff, resulting in long waiting lists.

But progress is being made. Last October, Dufty secured \$450,000 from the Department of Public Health to reduce waiting lists at The Stonewall Project and New Leaf.

The fact remains that most meth users aren’t seeking treatment—they frankly don’t see themselves as addicts. Gay men start out “just experimenting,” Tierney says.

“Initially, crystal produces an extremely enjoyable high,” says Etan Zaitzu, a health educator who has counseled meth users at the Haight Ashbury Free Clinic. “Speed takes it to the next level. You are up and alert, you’re focused on what you are doing. It’s fun to use, it tastes good, it’s sweet.”

However, once the drug takes hold, users spin desperately out of control. Addicts will go on drug binges and deprive their bodies of sleep and food for days on end. Hardcore meth users, known in the

gay community as “tweakers,” wear their meth use as a badge of pride, and declare how long they’ve gone without sleep: “I’m on day ten.” They become dangerously dehydrated, their brains suffer irreparable damage and they can lapse into psychotic or violent episodes that endanger themselves and others.

To target users who don’t care for themselves, the outreach community has implemented harm reduction programs to educate partiers.

Tweaker.org, a harm-reduction Web site operated by The Stonewall Project, offers practical advice and implores users to “party safe.” It advises common sense before partying by eating a big meal, getting a good night’s sleep and remembering to drink a lot of water. The risks of unsafe sex are outlined, and clean needles are encouraged for intravenous users of the drug. The overall tone of the site is surprisingly hip and non-accusatory, and each page of the site has links to various treatment options.

Some detractors of harm reduction claim that sites such as *tweaker.org* encourage or glamorize meth use. Others scoff at this assertion, stating that the ultimate goal is recovery and abstinence and that the dialogue must start somewhere.

Harm reduction programs capture users that abstinence programs might miss, such as experimental users or people in recovery who have relapsed.

Zaitzu says that users tend to repeatedly relapse and that “Only 10 percent of addicts successfully recover.”

He also faults lax drug enforcement with failing to stop the flow of meth into the community.

“In other states and cities, if you get caught you go to jail immediately,” Zaitzu says, “but in San Francisco you can get caught with possession or sales two, three, four times without going to jail. Proposition 36 gives people three chances to get treatment.”

Brandon wasn’t so lucky. He was recently arrested on out-of-state drug distribution charges and faces up to 10 years in a federal penitentiary. While he awaits trial, Brandon has been placed under house arrest and submits to random drug testing, which has effectively stopped his crystal use. “I’ve been clean for 44 days,” Brandon says. He vows he will never to go back to using.

In the end, people are on their own when it comes to dealing with addiction. Jim has run the gamut of treatment, recovery and relapse, yet from time to time he still gives in to his craving for PnP sex. “It’s like a monkey on your back,” he says. “Sometimes the trigger is too tempting, the guy is too hot and he’s holding. It’s just too easy.”

“The reason we call it a community is because we care about each other,” says Tierney, stressing the need for gay men to wise up to the dangers of the crystal scene. “Gay men should be informed that if someone disappears for three days and bumps all weekend, his friends ought to be equipped to say, ‘You’ve changed your life and we don’t like it.’ We’ve got to change the norm. Enough is enough.”

Chronicle shows that the HIV infection rate among gay meth users is double that of non-users. San Francisco is also reeling from a syphilis outbreak that is quickly spreading throughout the gay community—particularly among men who use crystal.

Sex becomes the primary focus of the addiction for many gay meth users. Jim, a soft-spoken 49-year-old user who is HIV positive, frankly admits: “Sex is just 100 percent better, that’s why you want to keep doing it again. My first time, I couldn’t believe how fun it was, how hot it was (having sex) on crystal.”

San Francisco Supervisor Bevan Dufty underscores the connection.

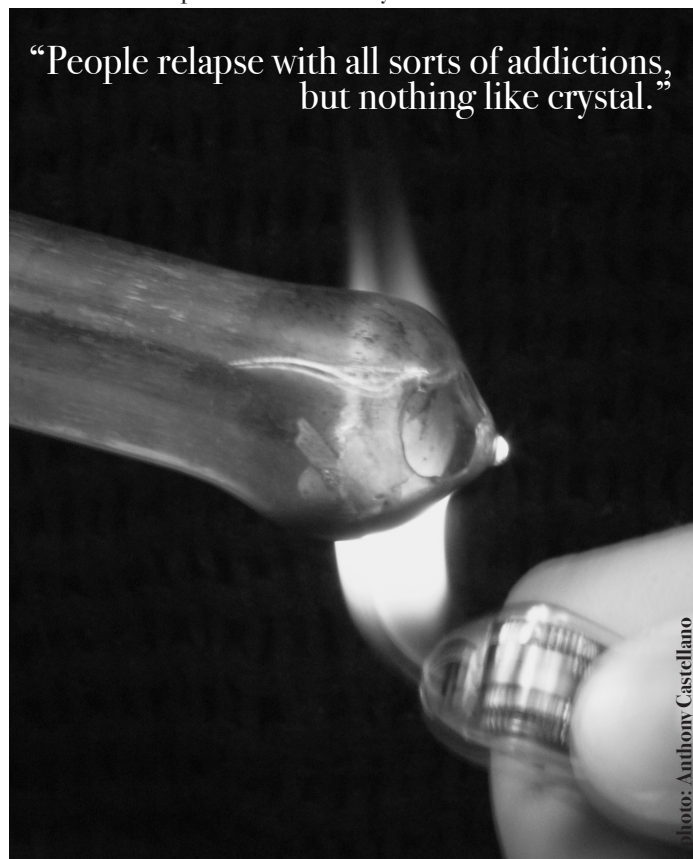


Photo: Anthony Castellano

“People relapse with all sorts of addictions, but nothing like crystal.”

“When you get to the core foundation of it, crystal is about sex. It’s a seductive substance that promises you’ll have incredible sex if you use it.”

Sexual encounters between men on crystal (called “Party and Play” or “PnP”) are almost never safe.

“Nobody uses condoms,” Jim says. “It doesn’t work. Sex gets so wild and crazy, if someone did use a condom, it would break.”

Condom use isn’t all that fails to come up during PnP negotiations—AIDS is also a taboo topic.

Jim sometimes reveals his HIV-positive status to sex partners, but if the other person doesn’t say anything, he doesn’t either.

Tom Kennedy, a counselor at The Stonewall Project, a UCSF drug treatment and education program, says meth users are also at risk for contracting HIV through non-consensual sex. “People will often

combine drugs—speed and GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate), speed and Special K (ketamine), speed and Viagra” and they’ll get so high and disoriented that “incidences of rape go way up.”

“Meth use is the leading reason why gay men are getting infected with HIV,” Kennedy says.

Viagra in particular has exacerbated risky sex among gay meth users. Meth commonly causes erectile dysfunction among men, but when they add Viagra to the mix, sex can last for hours on end, often with multiple partners.

Thanks to the Internet, like-minded individuals looking for PnP sex find it incredibly easy to meet each other. The Web site *m4m4sex.com* is wildly popular among gay men—its homepage boasts 355,000 worldwide members. The site exists solely as a service to match up men looking for casual sexual encounters. Members pay to create profiles to indicate what kind of sex they are looking for, and many have a preference for PnP.

Other sites such as *craigslist.org* allow Internet users to post anonymous listings for sex. Hundreds of daily posts include phrases such as “looking for PnP.”

“When you’re by yourself, you’re tempted to just get on the Internet and cruise guys,” Jake says. “The drug makes you focus on sex.”

Internet postings often offer access to crystal in exchange for risky sex. “Speed is currency in the gay culture—guys will have sex with other guys they normally wouldn’t just to get speed,” Kennedy says.

“It moves around like dollar bills,” Dufty explains. “They use it to buy sex, friendship... Gay young adults come to the Castro looking for a mecca, and we’re not prepared for them. If they can’t get a job right away or a place to stay, they are extremely vulnerable to people offering crystal for sex.”

In addition to the impact on their sexual health, gay meth users are faced with a raging addiction to the drug. Jake’s crystal use increased after he started dating a frequent meth user. He and his boyfriend moved in together and Jake went from snorting the drug to smoking it from a glass pipe.

Smoking meth produces a shorter but more intense effect, and Jake needed more and more to stay high. He and his boyfriend fed off of each other’s cravings for meth, and eventually Jake’s life became centered around the drug.

“I’d do it all night long, and then I’d have to go to work. At work, if I felt like I was coming down, I would go to the bathroom and smoke it,” Jake says.

His weight plummeted and he developed a permanent hacking cough. The staff at the restaurant where Jake works noticed the dramatic change, and he received word that his job was on the line. Startled into action, Jake stopped using, left his boyfriend and cut all ties to his dealer and friends who used. He kept his job and was able to stay off crystal for several months, but has occasionally relapsed.

“Brandon,” a tall, lanky man in his late 20s, whose name has



by Lubna Takruri

When Betty and Donald Deitch met and fell in love 25 years ago, they knew they were attracted to each other's creative intellect.

What neither of them could predict was that the combination of their imagination and teamwork would make the difference between surviving and going bankrupt.

In 1999, Donald was a mortgage banker and president of a division of Citizen Savings / First Nationwide Bank. Betty was an award-winning realtor who lucratively purchased and remodeled homes before putting them back on the market.

They lived in Diamond Heights and drove a black BMW with “Deitch” on the plates. Their stocks were soaring right along with their careers, until the dot-com bust in early 2000 robbed them of a quarter-of-a-million dollars, giving them one huge shove toward financial collapse.

Undeterred by their losses, the Deitchs invested everything they had left into a new business, something neither of them had done before.

They created a board game about the stock market that had almost made them penniless. It's called "Wall Street Spin" and the idea blossomed during the most unexpected challenges of their life together.

The Deitchs' positive spin on their departed fortune reflects their attitude about life.

"It's just money," Donald said. "We didn't die... almost."

The Deitchs were in the middle of producing “Wall Street Spin” in 2001 when Don was diagnosed with cancer and told he only had six months to live.

But the Deitchs had other plans. Donald began to recover. He is now in remission and receiving medical treatment as his condition continues to improve.

On top of that, “Wall Street Spin” was not only produced and distributed, but the spinner in the middle of the board was awarded a patent, which is unusual.

“They usually correct you a bunch of times and send you your papers back,” said Betty

about the application process for a patent from the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

The board layout is similar to “Monopoly” with the exception of a patented spinning disc. Players spin the disc, which resembles a Lazy Susan at a Chinese restaurant, to create multiple outcomes similar to the risks of the stock market.

The game involves real-life elements like dividend ups and downs, powerful blue chips, and of course, the unpredictable nature of the day's trading, which can change suddenly and drastically.

The Deitch's enthusiasm and creativity has translated what may otherwise be an intimidating and unexciting subject of economics into a very entertaining game.

The game is easy to play—even for children.

“Don’t play this game with a 10-year-old,” Donald said. “You’ll lose.”

“Wall Street Spin” is being distributed in Bay Area stores and has been acclaimed by

media outlets such as KTVU and the San Francisco Chronicle.

It has also earned international board game pundit Dr. Toy's "Best Children's Vacation Game" award. University of California at Berkeley's esteemed Haas School of Business has also reportedly expressed interest in using the game in their program.

"Wall Street Spin" is the first of their spinner board games. Four other games are finished but not yet distributed.

Meanwhile, Betty takes one or two classes at City College, as she has each semester since 2000. "I want to give kudos to City College teachers," said Betty, who finds that public speaking and broadcasting classes help her give better interviews now that she gets a lot of media exposure.

Betty and Don continue to create board game prototypes at home with their high-end scanning and printing equipment and graphic software.

"The games are drawn from our interests," which Betty said include traveling and storytelling. They've been to most of the places in their yet-to-be-released "Travel Spin" game. Last fall they visited the Japanese Alps, and believe Costa Rica is one of the best places to go for a vacation.

Since Betty and Donald met on lunch break in San Francisco's Financial District 25 years ago, the two have been true collaborators. Donald speculates that if they developed every idea they came up with games "would be all over the house."

The Deitch's house is immaculately maintained, except for the games covering the dining room table. Each room is adorned with exotic furnishings. In one room, over a table filled with more game experiments, hangs a large stained-glass sign that reads "Enchanted Things." It catches the sunlight when the curtains are pulled aside.

The Deitchs are enjoying their success, nevermind the obstacles. For them, the obstacles exist to be overcome, and the couple's positive 'spin' on life has been a pivotal factor in their success and strength.



**"It's just money.
We didn't die... almost."**



Top: Donald and Betty Deitch
Left: detail of "Wall Street Spin"
photos: Kate Collins

Local Bali

Gamelan Sekar Jaya's lightning flash orchestra



by Paul Romo

When the Bay Area music and dance ensemble Gamelan Sekar Jaya arrived to perform in Bali for the first time in 1985, they shocked the locals, including the governor.

"[The Balinese] were amazed foreigners could play their music, that we took the time to learn it so well and were able to perform the dances," said longtime director Wayne Vitale.

Since then, Gamelan Sekar Jaya or "Flowering Success Orchestra" has returned to Bali four times to perform at the Balinese Arts Festival as honored guests of the governor. This month-long summer celebration of "dance, music and beauty" is attended by "the whole of Bali," according to the festival's official Web site.

The 50-member, El Cerrito based ensemble is comprised of dancers accompanied by musicians, who play traditional





Balinese orchestra music known as Gamelan gong kebyar, which roughly translates as “lightning flash orchestra.”

The jangly, syncopated rhythm of gong kebyar is produced by pitched percussion instruments such as knobbed gongs and metallophones (similar to a xylophone), as well as various types of drums and chimes.

The music is largely based on repeating time cycles, often whizzing by at tremendous speed. Imagine four musicians playing in perfect unison, their individual instruments interlocking at a tempo of 400 beats per minute.

“Centuries old, the music as well as the dances manage to endure,” Vitale said, “because of its sophistication, the philosophical underpinnings and the reliance on teamwork, cooperation and sharing. Given the amount of people interacting on stage, participation must be a communal effort.”

Opposite page (clockwise from top right): Made Moja and Kompiang Metri-Davies perform a Balinese dance; detail of hammers; musicians perform at the Noe Valley Ministry; Mark Salvatore and Agus Cahyadi play pemades.

This page: Laura Deering, Alice Terry, Maria Omo and Anna Deering throw flower petals during a dance; right, composer and guest musical director, I Nyoman Windha plays a kendang.



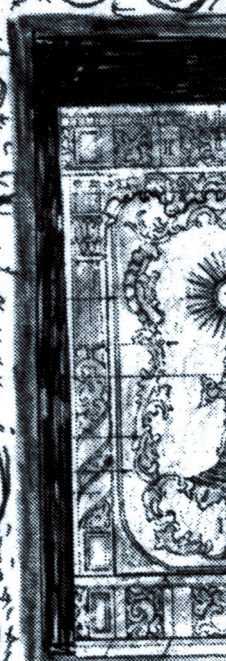
photos by Anthony Castellano



*Mission San Francisco de Assis,
popularly known as Mission Dolores,
is San Francisco's oldest structure.*

*It was founded in 1776
by Lieutenant Jose Joaquín Moraga in
the name of King Carlos III of Spain.*

*Fray Francisco Palou celebrated the
mission's first mass on June 29, 1776.*





Behind the Veil

Centuries-old mural revealed

by Suzanne Brinkley

Tucked away behind the hand-carved Spanish Baroque altar of Mission Dolores, a 20-by-22-foot Indian mural has been hidden from public view for more than 200 years. It was last seen in 1796, 20 years after the U.S. Declaration of Independence was signed, when California was still a territory of Mexico.

"It is the damn best piece of mission artwork in the whole world insofar as Indian artwork of that period," said Andrew Galvan, Mission Dolores' curator.

The ornate mural features carved niches that contained religious statues and once served as a decorative partition behind the altar of the church. It was painted by Ohlone Indians in 1791 and was last seen by the public in 1796 when a handcrafted wooden Mexican mural — called a *reredos* — was placed in front of it. Although never the intention, this placement would serve to protect and preserve the Ohlone mural for the next two centuries.

This past January, artist Ben Wood and an archeologist Eric Blind

Drawing of the recently discovered Mission Dolores mural from "The Decorations of the California Missions," by Norman Neuerburg, Bellerophon Books, 1996.

“The mural is a fascinating link
in the long chain of California heritage.
It’s a link that joins two very different cultures:
native Californian Indians and Christian missionaries.”

—Eric Blind



received permission to document the mural, but to do it, they had to climb into the attic of the mission, then lower themselves through a trapdoor into the confines of a cramped three-foot crawl space.

To avoid disturbing the artwork, they designed a pulley system with a camera mount that enabled them to move horizontally and vertically to digitally capture the 7-by-11-inch sections.

Wood and Blind have painstakingly photographed more than 300 images of the mural. Their slides were projected onto the rotunda of the adjacent Mission Dolores Basilica during a two-week exhibition in late January.

During the exhibition’s run, more than 3,000 people visited the Mission. Attendance skyrocketed to 700 visitors just one day after the exhibit was featured in the San Francisco Chronicle. Stories on the mural have been featured on local television and radio stations, as well as in the Los Angeles Times.

“Every day we still get people coming in here, asking to see the

exhibit even though it has been down for well over a month,” said Paula Zimmermann, a gift shop docent at the mission.

The idea for an exhibition began last November when Wood became interested in a project emphasizing the mission’s connection with the Ohlone Indians. Galvan showed him the Indian artwork hidden behind the main altar and suggested it be the focus of the project.

“For 10 years as curator, I knew it existed, but assumed it had been severely degraded,” said Brother Guire Cleary, former curator of the Mission Dolores.

Overwhelmed by the response that the show generated, Wood and Blind began assembling their images for a Web site to accommodate interest in the mural from the public, the media, and archaeologists.

They plan to resume photographing the mural, and Wood estimates that approximately 900 more images will be needed to finish recording the remaining sections.

Opposite page:
top, Archeologist
Eric Blind and artist
Ben Wood on the steps of the Mission
Dolores Basilica;
bottom, Mission
Dolores' facade



This page:
The mission altar as
it looks today, in
front of the newly
discovered mural.
photos: Kate Collins

Even though pipes and support beams obstruct the lower two-thirds of the mural, making the pulley system they designed unusable, they are confident of completing the project. But future documentation work will depend on availability of funding. Currently, Wood and Blind are volunteering their time and are paying incidental costs out of their own pockets.

U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer recently referred to Wood and Blind's work when she introduced legislation in support of appropriations for California Missions. If passed, Senate Bill 1306 would provide federal matching grants of up to \$10 million over a five-year period for the California Mission Foundation, which will help restore and preserve California Missions.

Meanwhile, Galvan is excited about the increased public awareness the mural has focused on the Mission's history, the Indian's contributions to its development, as well as Indian artwork.

He hopes interest will generate funds to preserve the mural, but adds

that restricting access to the mural will be necessary.

"We need to realize that we have a very significant piece of artwork," Galvan said, "and the first thing we need to do is continue to conserve and preserve it."

The mural's existence has hardly been a secret. Numerous art historians have documented it, and the U.S. Department of Interior considers it one of the most extraordinary pieces of Spanish Baroque decorative art in the United States.

"The mural is a fascinating link in the long chain of California heritage. It's a link that joins two very different cultures: native Californian Indians and Christian missionaries," Blind said. "The mural itself is a unique physical embodiment of the joining of these two cultures as represented through artistic collaboration... not to mention it's quite beautiful."

For more information visit: www.missiondoloresmural.com

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by Anthony Castellano

Carolina, made famous as one of the first districts to use bussing to integrate, declared itself “unitary” and stopped actively pursuing desegregation. The Supreme Court refused to hear a challenge from parents to the new policy, and within 10 years the number of African-American students attending black majority schools rose 50 percent. The change was even more dramatic at the high school level where it rose 200 percent.

The recent return to segregated schools coincides with increased federal scrutiny following President George W. Bush’s 2002 No Child Left Behind Act, which relies heavily on standardized testing to track schools’ progress.

Recent studies show a correlation between poverty and poor achievement on standardized tests, like those required by the NCLB.

The Harvard study also found that 88 percent of intensely segregated schools have high poverty rates, as measured by student participation in free and reduced lunch programs.

“The statistics required by the No Child Left Behind Act are dramatically documenting these inequalities by identifying ‘failing schools,’ which all too often are schools segregated by race and poverty,” wrote Gary Orfield and Chungmei Lee, the authors of the study.

“Quality is what you can buy,” said NAACP President Alice Hoffman. “We operate under two different systems.”

How does San Francisco rate?

Links between segregation and achievement are apparent in San Francisco as well, according to Stuart Biegel, consent decree monitor for San Francisco schools.

“Resegregation is having a real, palpable and adverse effect on the district’s educational programs,” Biegel stated in a report to the U.S. District Court. “Schools which are doing the best at closing the achievement gap are invariably schools that have maintained substantially racially and ethnically diverse student populations.”

Of San Francisco’s 72 elementary schools, 15 percent carry the Harvard report’s “Apartheid Schools” rating and 36 of the city’s elementary schools are considered “Intensely Segregated.”

For a city that prides itself on its liberal traditions, when it comes to integrating schools, San Francisco doesn’t rate very well, although not for lack of trying.

San Francisco actively worked to achieve diversity in its schools before 1994. The San Francisco Unified School District capped enrollment for any one ethnic group in a school at 45 percent to keep a school from being dominated by one race. However, this policy was challenged by a lawsuit after Proposition 209 passed, which bars the use of racial information in public education. The district was ordered by U.S. District Judge William Orrick to exclude race when assigning students.

The district revamped its plan in 2001 to comply with the judge’s order and reduced but did not eliminate the role played by race in the assignment policy.

The district argues that using race when assigning students is necessary to enhance diversity, a worthwhile goal. Orrick did not agree and sent the district back to the drawing board to strike any reference to race from its policy.

After the 45 percent cap was eliminated by court order, segregation increased in San Francisco public schools, according to Dr. Dan Kelly, Board of Education president.

The report by the consent decree monitor filed in March 2004 confirms Dr. Kelly’s statement. “Resegregation across the [San Francisco Unified School District] is even worse than projected this past summer, with 41–43 schools now severely resegregated at one or more grade levels.”

The district’s current plan allows for “open enrollment,” meaning any student can apply to any school. The plan uses “race neutral” criteria, such as socioeconomic status or mother’s educational background, to increase diversity when a school has more applicants than space.

Addressing the Board of Education on March 2, Arlene Ackerman, superintendent of San Francisco Unified School District, said that she was disappointed with the results of open enrollment. She suggested that opening schools to all students is one thing, but that getting them into different schools is another.

At 8:40 a.m. the bell rings, and all of the students on the Starr King schoolyard stop what they're doing. A teacher blows a whistle and Ced, a fifth grader, gets in line with his classmates. He is the tallest in the class and the darkest, with skin shining purple in the sun.

Before Ced in line is Alfredo, a bilingual student who speaks Spanish at home; Bria comes next—African-American, small for her age, quick with a smile; then Davina, a tall Samoan girl with dark curly hair. So it goes through the line: African-American, Latino, Samoan: children of every size, shape and shade except white.

A recent report released by the Harvard Civil Rights Project in anticipation of the 50th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education calls attention to this alarming racial trend. After years of improving integration, the nation's schools are once again becoming segregated.

The Harvard report ranks U.S. public schools based on their level of segregation. The report labels schools like Ced's as "Intensely Segregated" (90 percent minority), which denotes the second lowest level of integration between minority and white students.

According to the latest data available on the San Francisco Unified School District Web site, Ced's school is not unique. More than half of San Francisco's public schools are "Intensely Segregated."

Schools with the highest level of separation, "Apartheid Schools" are overwhelmingly (99 percent) populated by minorities. In San Francisco there are 10 of them.

"This difficult situation is number one on the national NAACP agenda," said Alice Hoffman, president of the NAACP's California State Conference.

The 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education was a watershed moment for anti-segregation in American schools. It was the first in a series of Supreme Court cases that literally changed the face of public education. Schools that had previously separated students of different races were forced to integrate their classrooms by law when Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote, "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

Active desegregation following the decision dramatically increased the racial mix within the nation's schools. According to the Harvard study, the percentage of southern African-Americans attending majority white schools climbed from negligible in 1954 to a peak of 43.5 percent in 1988. However, the study shows those gains were fleeting. The percentage of southern African-Americans at mostly white schools in 2001 had fallen back to pre-1970 levels.

The Supreme Court integrates the country's schools

When the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Brown over the Topeka Board of Education, they overturned the previously accepted doctrine of separate but equal. But 10 years after the ruling little had changed. Most white students attended white schools and most African-American students attended black schools.

Big changes in the racial make-up of U.S. schools did not take place until the late 1960s when the Supreme Court made a series of decisions on the heels of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The Court refined its Brown v. Board language, specifically the phrase "all deliberate speed," requiring districts to comply immediately.

The court also began advocating changes in student assignment policies that required school districts to be more active in their pursuit of a "unitary" (as opposed to "dual") school system. Among these cases was Swann v. Charlotte/

Mecklenburg Board of Education in 1971, which proposed bussing as a solution to integrate schools.

There was a great rise in diversity in the nation's schools after the Supreme Court cases of the late '60s and early '70s. But after peaking in 1988, many of the gains in integration between minorities and whites have been lost, and once again the Supreme Court is at the forefront of this social change.

What the Supreme Court giveth, it also taketh away

The '90s saw a change in Supreme Court opinions as well as a reverse in the integration trends of school districts. Integration supporters watched as 20 years of progress disappeared.

Court cases such as Dowell v. Oklahoma City in 1991 ushered in a new era of allowing school districts to declare themselves "unitary" and dismantle desegregation plans.

The Charlotte/Mecklenburg School District in North

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The following San Francisco Unified School District schools met the "Apartheid Schools" criteria of the Harvard report (99% minority). All of them are clustered around Bayview /Hunter's Point and the Tenderloin.

Bret Harte - 99%	Malcom X - 100%
George Washington Carver - 99.7%	Mission Education Center- 100%
Chinese Education Center - 100%	Jean Parker - 99.7%
Dr. Charles Drew - 99.3%	Visitation Valley - 99.6%
Golden Gate - 99.6%	
Gordon J. Lau - 99.7%	

Source: 2001-2002 SFUSD web data School Accountability Report Cards (SARC)

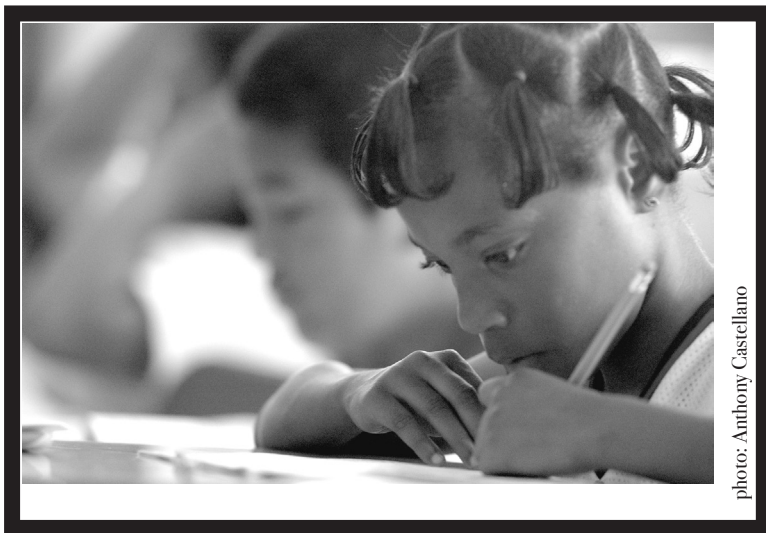


photo: Anthony Castellano

BBC Radio Online by Khiaecia Key

Searching for an online musical experience different than local radio is like hoping a fast-food joint serves filet mignon. Many sites purport to give you choices, but fail to mention the heavy doses of patience and optimism required to find something good.

For the consummate audiophile, tuning in to BBC Radio Online is like sitting down to an aural feast. Thanks to DJ-driven programming, listeners are served a multitude of eclectic genres. Celtic songs, anyone? Or maybe some “Bhangradelic” Punjabi beats?

BBC Radio offers listeners a smorgasbord of other audible treats including sports, game shows, film reviews and history discussions.

No membership or software downloads are required. Programs are commercial free, with the exception of live broadcasts.

To get a proper serving of BBC Radio via the Internet, you must have a PC with a sound card, speakers and software such as Real One Player. For your own taste test, visit bbc.co.uk/radio.

radionetscape.com by Michelle Moday

Radio@Netscape Plus (AOL Music), provides listeners with over 175 stations of streaming music and is surprisingly commercial free. Only after over 30 songs in a row does any interruption occur—a window pops up asking “Are you still there?” Click OK and the music continues.

Station listings are conveniently divided into categories and sub-categories, which run the gamut of styles. Hover the cursor over a category to see “What’s On” or “What’s Next” on other stations without breaking away from your current vibe. There are links to “Get Artist Info” or “Buy the CD” if you really like what you hear.

If you miss the days of the DJ request line, the Internet equivalent might be the “Rate This Song” feature. Without tying up the phone on repeat dial, listeners can request to hear music from a particular artist by rating songs on a scale of one to five stars. Throw fives all day if you want. It could be extremely beneficial to relatively unsung DJs or musicians and add variety to the current market of mainstream “choices.”

To connect to *Radio@Netscape Plus*, you need a sound chip or dedicated soundcard, Windows 95/98/2000/XP/NT and 20MB of disk space.

radioparadise.com by Mark Izatt Folkman

Billing itself as “eclectic, intelligent rock,” *radioparadise.com* broadcasts across the Internet from a one-man studio located in the Sierra Nevada foothills town of Paradise, California. Each day Bill Goldsmith, the station’s founder and sole DJ, chooses a mix of songs that traverses a wide range of decade-spanning genres.

Constantly dancing from one style to the next could sound chaotic, but Goldsmith’s genius ear makes him an expert at selecting music that blends together, making each successive song a new revelation of congruity and harmony. The station plays stalwarts such as Tom Waits and Joni Mitchell, ’90s gems and hot-off-the-press electronic rock. The repertoire is extensive and extremely diverse—meaning you’ll never hear the same song played twice in the same day.

The station is financed solely through listener donations, keeping the station free of commercials and other corporate-driven antics. Listeners aren’t only asked to contribute financially; the Web site encourages registered users to rate each song and leave comments. Goldsmith welcomes the feedback and uses it to determine what songs he’ll be spinning next. Great music, listener interaction and a unique, progressive radio format makes for a slice of radio paradise.

Radioparadise.com’s 24-hour music stream can be accessed directly from the Web site; Mac users can listen using *iTunes*; PC users can listen on *windowsmedia.com* or *iTunes*, Windows Media Player, Winamp or RealAudio Player.

INTERNET RADIO

by Kate Collins

San Francisco has more women in top government positions than anywhere else in America.

They make decisions that affect both our community and the face of America's political hierarchy. Here, we get familiar with six of the leaders.

National Treasures

No stranger to politics in San Francisco, **Diane Feinstein** has paved the way for women in politics since the 1960s. Feinstein was the first woman on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, the first woman mayor of San Francisco and the first woman to be elected a U.S. Senator of California. With a career full of firsts, Feinstein continues to make waves in the Senate where she serves on more than five committees, including the Judiciary Committee and the Appropriations Committee. She is undoubtedly one of the leading ladies in politics.



Barbara Boxer's career has spanned over 20 years, and she is no stranger to the political circus. As the U.S. Senate's leading defender of abortion rights, Sen. Boxer has made headway in protecting women's rights and authored both the Family Planning Act and Choice Protection Act. She has consistently championed women's rights throughout her political career. She has been adamant in her efforts to further the rights of women in all facets of society and is a shining example of what a woman in a powerful position can achieve.



Congress woman **Nancy Pelosi**, representing the Eighth District, which includes most of San Francisco, is the first woman to serve as the Democratic Minority Leader in the U.S. House of Representatives. She has been instrumental in the fight for human rights, and is a strong advocate for funding AIDS research projects, such as the Ryan White CARE Act. Pelosi comes from a family involved in public service. She hails from the East Coast, but her husband is a native San Franciscan. Pelosi is setting a new precedent in the House and was the first representative to strongly criticize the Bush Administration's exit strategy for Iraq.



WOMEN ON



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Local Leaders

Heather Fong, who grew up in San Francisco's Chinatown, started working at the San Francisco Police Department in the mid-'70s. At the time she was one of two Asian-America women on the force. Working her way up the ladder, she achieved the position of deputy chief before recently being promoted to police chief amid a whirlwind of controversy. Fong has shown remarkable dedication and persistence. She leads one of the largest metropolitan police departments in America. Fong says, "It's wonderful to have so many women in positions of power. They are bringing professional experience to their jobs and offering a different perspective."



Newly-appointed Fire Chief **Joanne Hayes-White**, a native San Franciscan, received her BA in business at the University of Santa Clara and also attended classes at City College of San Francisco. She applauds San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom's "bold moves" in appointing more women to positions of authority in San Francisco. White takes her position very seriously and welcomes the opportunity to act a role model to young women and men, including her three young sons. "This is a historical time, an exciting time," she says. "There is a renewed energy in the city."



Kamala Harris, who was born in Oakland and raised in Berkeley, has proven that hard work pays off. A veteran prosecutor, she has dedicated her time and talents to improving the quality of life in our community and prosecuting violent crimes to the fullest extent of the law. Harris was elected in a landslide but has her work cut out for her. Even though this D.A. uses her professional and personal experience to get the job done, she believes her best assets are "knowing how to be compassionate and competent."



Lotus Blossoms & Dragon Ladies

Kick-ass Asian women and the evolution of the stereotype

by Angelica Realce

Asian-American cinema flourishes in the independent circuit and the film industries of Hong Kong, Japan and India entice Hollywood's appetite for new stars, but before the 1993 mainstream release of Wayne Wang's film adaptation of Amy Tan's "The Joy Luck Club," Asian-American ensembles weren't catching the attention of mainstream talent scouts.

Hollywood has shunned Asian and Asian-American actors for most of its 97-year history, but over the past decade, filmmakers have been reshaping perceptions of Asians—particularly Asian women.

Now it seems Hollywood has gone from kicking Asian women in the ass—from assigning them powerless roles to writing roles that kick-ass, even though many are still steeped in prejudice.

Michelle Yeoh held her own as a "Bond girl" in "Tomorrow Never Dies." Ang Lee won a Best Director Academy Award for "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," featuring Yeoh and Zhang Ziyi. Lucy Liu investigated crimes as one of "Charlie's Angels," and Kelly Hu starred as the leading lady in "The Scorpion King."

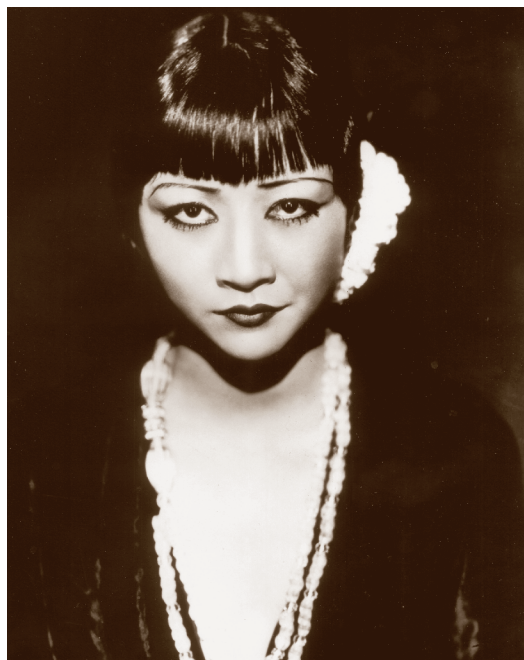
Despite these breakthroughs, Asian and Asian-American actors still find themselves prey to scripted stereotypes and second-string parts in movies: gangsters, war enemies, martial artists, model minorities, nerds, grocers, lotus blossoms, dragon ladies and girlfriends.

It started with the roles created in the 1930s, during the height of the "Yellow Peril," a term widely used to describe American sentiments towards Asians.

As a threat to agricultural, mining and railroad jobs, the conflict between Americans and Asian immigrants was recorded in early 20th century films. Hollywood portrayed interracial relationships as undesirable and immoral, even to the extent of writing this prejudice into the Motion Picture Code. In films, these relationships, particularly romantic and sexual relationships between races, were shown as destined to fail and as symbols of weakness.

The pioneering Asian-American actress Anna May Wong was the first to star in these "Lotus Blossom roles"—where Asian women became victims to tragic, forbidden love affairs with white men.

At the end of each of these films, Wong's character sacrifices her life for her love or dies alongside him à la "Madame Butterfly" or the more recent "Miss Saigon."



Pioneering Asian-American actress Anna May Wong was the first to star in the Lotus Blossom and Dragon Lady roles in the 1930s.

Photo courtesy of National Asian American Telecommunications Association

Wong's more notorious roles as the opposite stereotype, the "Dragon Lady," showed Asian women as arch-villains. This stereotype, also bred from the anti-Asian sentiments of the early 1900s, possessed both seductive and masculine qualities. Wong's villains reeked with treachery and were consequently evil and unlovable.

In the late 20th century, perceptions turned around slightly.

Instead of withering away at the expense of forbidden love, Asian and Asian-American women were transformed into the white man's sexual fetish. For example, Tia Carrere appeared in the 1992 movie "Wayne's World" as mini dress-wearing musician Cassandra Wong. Carrere took center stage as the sex symbol in the comedy that launched her acting career.

In the book "Out of the Shadows: Asians in American Cinema," actress Tamlyn Tomita points out another stereotype. She writes, "The martial arts kick-ass chicks clad in leather pants is becoming a lot more prevalent and a lot more trendy."

Bruce Lee and the kung-fu films of the 1970s set the tone for America's fascination with martial-arts action.

Plus, sex and martial arts sells.

In "Charlie's Angels," Liu's character is shown fighting, her long, black hair flowing in slow motion as she kicks adversaries with her combat stilettos.

In "X-2: X-men Unite," Hu plays Deathstrike, armed with adamantium claws, mutant healing capabilities and a sexy leather catsuit. Contemporary director Quentin Tarantino's love of kung-fu films

and Japanese animé merge in “Kill Bill: Volume I,” O’Ren Ishii, a villain played by Liu, defines the origin and evolution of the “Dragon Lady” in Japanese animation scenes that flash back to the traumatic event responsible for molding her into an assassin. By avenging her parents’ brutal deaths, she developed into an elite killer rather than the inhumane “Dragon Lady” of Hollywood’s past.

To give filmgoers a taste of the original “Dragon Lady,” the recent 22nd annual San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival, the first and largest Asian film festival in North America, showcased four of Anna May Wong’s movies. For the event, Stephen Wong (no relation), associate director of the Berkeley Art Museum, wrote a tribute in which he honored Wong as “the first Chinese-American actress to achieve international stardom.”

Film festivals like these, which are outside the mainstream channels of marketing and distribution, foster an independent hotbed where new and established directors can tap into new characters to move past stereotypes portrayed in Hollywood.

Like Sundance and Cannes, directors, writers and actors can use their creative freedom to tell stories from a different perspective.

Indian American filmmaker Arati Misro says, “People are more

willing to take a chance now. Audiences are looking for something different. They’re bored!”

Recent films are beginning to feature female Asian characters with complex personalities. Jacqueline Kim plays Darcy in “Charlotte Sometimes,” a mysterious stranger detangling a love triangle. Tomita stars as a human mother to a robot baby in “Robot Stories.” Tiffany Limos yearns for freedom from her religious father in “Ken Park,” a film about youths and their dysfunctional family lives.

Even though roles continue to improve, opportunities still fall short of unlimited. The 2001 SAG “Casting Data Report” states that “Asian/Pacific Islanders received 2.5 percent of the roles cast, down from the 2.6 percent of the roles they received in 2000, but still not close to the approximately four percent the group represents in the U.S. population.” No new statistics for 2002 and 2003 have been posted to date.

Films continue to stereotype Asian and Asian Americans but when scripts are written well, the characters etch themselves into the minds of mass audiences. Then whether the film becomes a blockbuster or an underground hit, the influence is like no other. Audiences will demand more, and perceptions can change.

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Now it seems Hollywood has gone from kicking Asian women in the ass—from assigning them powerless roles to writing roles that kick-ass, even though many are still steeped in prejudice.



Filmstrip (left to right): Anna May Wong publicity photo; as a “Lotus Flower” in the 1922 silent film, “Toll of the Sea”; Philip Ahn and Anna May Wong in the 1937 film “Daughter of Shanghai.” All images courtesy of NAATA. Photo illustration: Dante Mendoza



photo: Anthony Castellano photo illustration: Michelle Moday

by Hubert Huang

Nowhere do people detest corporate chains more than in San Francisco. Yet over the past quarter-century, about 35 neighborhood theaters in the city have closed. Some of them, which stood for 20, 50, even 100 years, had historical landmark potential.

The Fox on Market, the Alexandria on Geary, the El Rey on Ocean, the Colliseum on Clement, the Alhambra, the Embassy, the Esquire, the Haight, the Irving, the Granada, the Mission, the New Fillmore, the New Mission, the New Potrero, the Noe, the Nob Hill, the Northpoint, the Paramount, the Parkside, St. Francis, the Strand, the Valencia and the Orpheum were all once wide screen-theaters that featured cinerama films.

Some of these theaters had detailed Egyptian architecture, art-deco chandeliers hanging from tented ceilings and pipe organs that were played during intermission.

The Richmond District's 81-year-old Alexandria Theater closed its doors this past winter. The semi-circular white marquis now stands naked. Glass cases that advertised coming attractions are tagged with graffiti. Its vertical neon sign no longer glows crimson but blends into the dark sky behind it.

Eric Hooper, who showed up on closing day to snap a few photos of the Alexandria, which he traveled to regularly from his home near City College, said, "It had a cozy and warm atmosphere, different than newer theaters where it's just a bunch of boxes. It had a style and detail that made it far more interesting to go to."

For those remaining loyal to the older movie palaces, these venues represent more than just a place to see a film.

"At a great movie theater that's been around 40 or 50 years, not some cookie cutter multiplex, people have come together to laugh and cry. It's almost a secular church," said Patrick Crowley, who co-founded *cinematreasures.org*, with film historian Ross Melnik. Their Web site, dedicated to saving movie palaces, contains a database of nearly 5,000 neighborhood theaters across the country.

Not long ago, nearly every neighborhood in San Francisco boasted a theater it could call its own, but now only a dozen of these intimate venues remain. These last survivors continue to struggle.

Despite improving business over the past couple of years, the Balboa Theater's General Manager Roger Paul said, "Every neighborhood theater is in danger of closing." This is especially true for theaters owned by Regal Cinemas, which acquired the bankrupt United Artists theaters several years ago.

In addition to the closing of the Alexandria in February, the Vogue Theater on Sacramento Street was sold in January. Even the Coronet Theater on Geary Street, the largest and arguably most famous theater in San Francisco, has been slotted for demolition in early 2005. Its replacement, senior housing, will likely have trouble filling the entertainment void.

Regal Cinema spokesman Dick Westerling said, "The underlying real estate value of these assets is greater than the value of the assets as theaters."

Regal's former single-screen theater at the Stonestown Mall was split in half during the '80s by placing a wall down the center. After nearly two decades, they have yet to realign seats that face that wall.

Some moviegoers who frequent the AMC 1000 on the corner of Geary and Van Ness or the Sony Metreon in downtown San Francisco are saddened by the disappearance of the neighborhood venues.

"It's sad that big chains can come in and put small theaters out of business," said Lori Bruckner, who brought her children across town from West Portal to watch a Disney movie at the AMC 1000. She'd like to support The Empire, her neighborhood theater, but she said it doesn't play the movies she likes to share with her children.

Donald Cho, who also frequents the AMC, likes the convenience of a multiplex. "They have all the movies showing at one place. Sometimes, going to the movies is a spur-of-the-moment thing and if they have 20 movies, there's going to be something I want to see."

In addition, multiplexes boast the latest in sound and projection technology—DTS, SDDS, THX, DLP—and can offer amenities like stadium seating. But, Paul said, "people see what they gain with multiplexes, but they don't realize what they lose."

He argues that what you gain is 20 minutes of annoying commercials, food that consists of a chemical paste that's passed off as nacho cheese and a butter substitute that's closer to motor oil than anything edible, on top of a \$10 ticket.

Despite endless streams of money that corporations pour into modern megaplexes and the public's obsession with the biggest and best that technology can offer, neighborhood theaters are fighting harder than ever to survive.

Most of the smaller theaters, the Alexandria being a notable exception, showcase smaller release films and special events to carve out a niche.

The Castro Theater, one of the most successful neighborhood theaters in the country, generates much of its revenue through special events and hosting film festivals, including Frameline's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Film Festival and the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival.

The 4 Star concentrates on Asian film, often showing titles that don't screen anywhere else in the Bay Area.

The Balboa Theater has been especially proactive, implementing wholesale renovations that include everything from new carpets to wheelchair accessibility. And the efforts don't stop there. The Balboa circulates a monthly newsletter to 6,000 of its supporters. The theater celebrated its 78th anniversary with a 1920s costume party on February 26.

Like many things that have historical significance, the value of neighborhood theaters is hard to measure. The true impact of the loss may not be felt immediately. Not long ago, the closing of Radio City Music Hall seemed imminent, but imagining New York now without one of its most notable landmarks is almost unthinkable.

"You have to ultimately decide what kind of city you want to live in—one where every building is the same, and the store on this corner is the same as the store on that corner, or one where independent

businesses make their own decisions," Melnik said. "Neighborhood theaters are the last community center in the U.S. where all genders, races and religions come together."

Despite the efforts of *cinematreasures.org* and other groups, such as the San Francisco Neighborhood Theater Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving the few remaining neighborhood theaters, the trend towards larger multiplexes does not seem to be diminishing.

In fall 2006, Forest City Development will open the largest urban shopping complex west of the Mississippi River on the site in San Francisco that formerly housed the Emporium Building. Included will be a Bloomingdales, 200 retail stores, a 32-story luxury hotel and a state-of-the-art nine-screen multiplex. Coupled with the 15-theater multiplex at the Sony Metreon, that will put 24 screens within a two-block radius.

In a city that prides itself on its independent history, the number of screens in one two-block area will exceed the sum total of the city's remaining neighborhood theaters.

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photo: Anthony Castellano

An estimated **175,000** students
have been **impacted**
by the 2003-2004 state budget cuts



and cannot afford to attend **California** community colleges.
These are the **Missing Students**.

“The Missing Students” statues shadow City College’s west lawn a week before being transported to the capitol in Sacramento. They stand in silent protest against additional budget cuts that would further affect California’s community college students.

The Castro Theatre,
built in 1922,
is a registered
landmark



SFIAAFF PRESENTS
"ADVENTURES OF
IRON PUSSY"